

# SIX NURSERY CLASSICS



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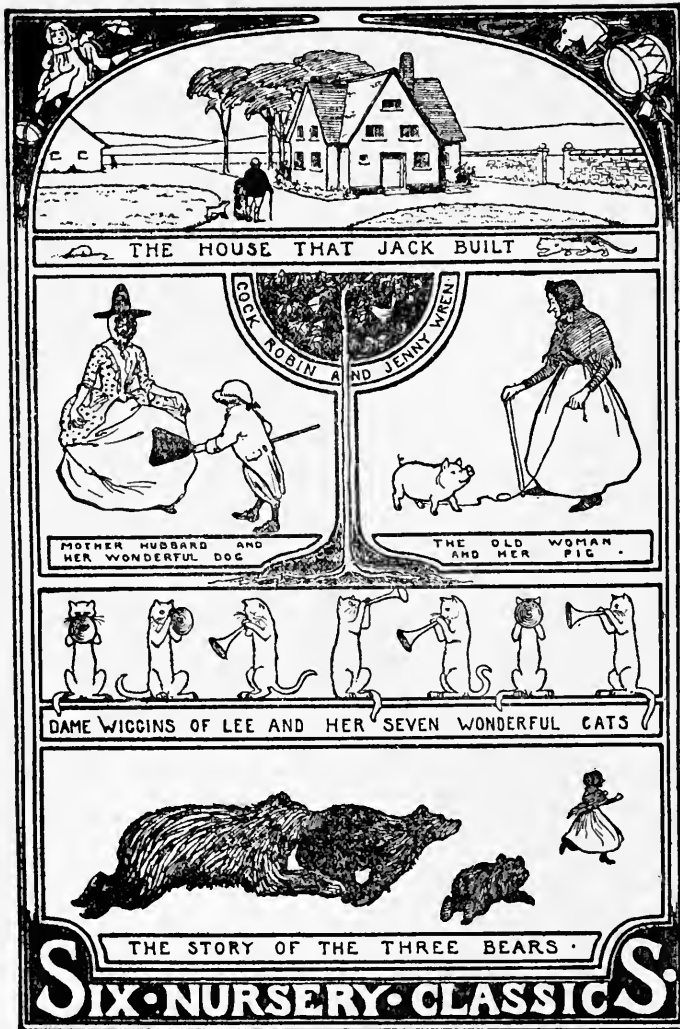
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HEATH SUPPLEMENTARY READERS

# SIX NURSERY CLASSICS

INTRODUCTION BY  
M. V. O'SHEA



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HOW MANY  
THINGS  
THAT ARE



## INTRODUCTION

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THESE stories have been told to children since the world was young, and they are as fresh, as interesting, and as captivating to-day as they ever have been. The main reason for this may be found in the fact that they portray action and adventure. They are full of life and movement and heroic deeds. Further, they afford an excellent opportunity for the exercise of fancy, and powerfully stimulate the imagination.

These little classics furnish unsurpassed means for the teaching of reading. For one thing, they present the best models of English that can be set before the young. It seems as though, having come down to us through so many hands, they have become polished until they are well-nigh perfect; one cannot see how he could change a word without loss of effect. And again, what really interests the child makes the best material for his reading lessons. He learns quickly when the *content* of his reading is attractive. He willingly digs his way through the words to their meaning when he finds he is getting something that he likes.

This book may take its place in the child's reading along with the nursery rhymes and jingles, or perhaps a little later. As the stories are longer, they are of course not all so well adapted for memorizing as those, but the rhythmical form of some, and the simple and direct language of them all, make them as welcome in the school-room as in the home circle.

M. V. O'SHEA

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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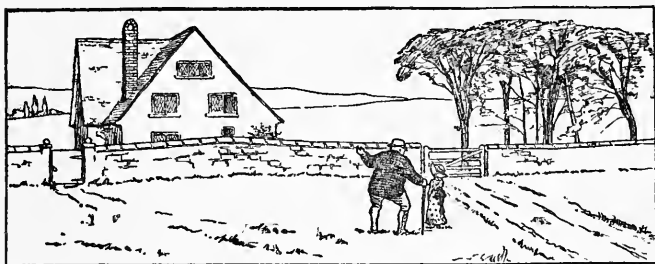
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# SIX NURSERY CLASSICS

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## THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT



This is the house that Jack built.

This is the malt



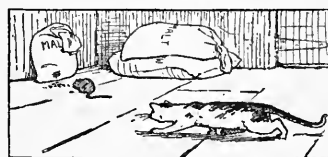
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the rat,  
That ate the malt



That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt



That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.



This is the cow with the crumpled horn,  
That tossed the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.



This is the maiden all forlorn,  
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn,  
That tossed the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.



This is the man all tattered and torn,  
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,  
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn,

That tossed the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.



This is the priest all shaven and shorn,  
That married the man all tattered and torn,  
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,  
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn,  
That tossed the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.



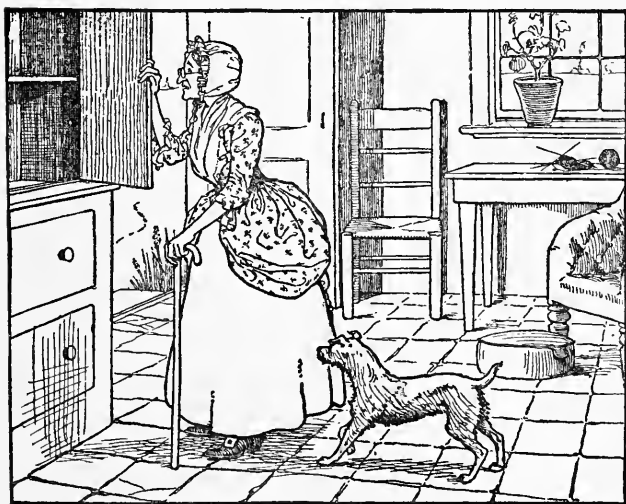
This is the cock that crowed in the morn,  
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn,  
That married the man all tattered and torn,  
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,  
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn,  
That tossed the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.



This is the farmer sowing his corn,  
That kept the cock that crowed in the morn,  
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn,  
That married the man all tattered and torn,  
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,  
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn,  
That tossed the dog,  
That worried the cat,  
That killed the rat,  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.





MOTHER HUBBARD AND HER  
WONDERFUL DOG

Old Mother Hubbard  
Went to the cupboard,  
To get her poor Dog a bone;  
But when she came there,  
The cupboard was bare,  
And so the poor Dog had none.

She went to the baker's  
To buy him some bread;  
But when she came back,  
The poor Dog was dead.



She went to the joiner's  
To buy him a coffin;  
But when she came back,  
The poor Dog was laughing.



She went to the hatter's  
To buy him a hat;  
But when she came back,  
He was feeding the cat.



She went to the barber's  
To buy him a wig;  
But when she came back,  
He was dancing a jig.



She went to the fruiterer's  
To buy him some fruit;  
But when she came back,  
He was playing the flute.



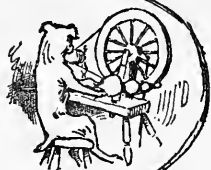
She went to the tailor's  
To buy him a coat;  
But when she came back,  
He was riding a goat.



She went to the cobbler's  
To buy him some shoes;  
But when she came back,  
He was reading the news.



She went to the sempstress'  
To buy him some linen;  
And when she came back,  
The Dog was a-spinning.



She went to the hosier's  
To buy him some hose;  
But when she came back,  
He was dressed in his clothes.



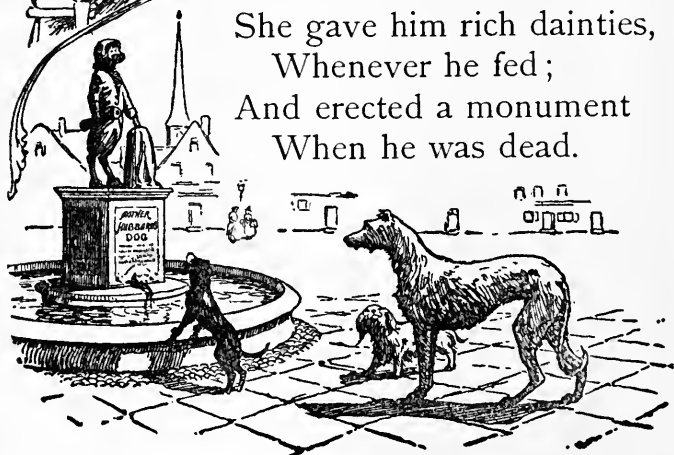
The Dame made a curtsy,  
The Dog made a bow;  
The Dame said, "Your servant,"  
The Dog said, "Bow, wow."





This wonderful Dog  
Was Dame Hubbard's delight,  
He could sing, he could dance,  
He could read, he could write.

She gave him rich dainties,  
Whenever he fed;  
And erected a monument  
When he was dead.



# THE COURTSHIP, MERRY MARRIAGE, AND PICNIC DINNER OF COCK ROBIN AND JENNY WREN;

TO WHICH IS ADDED

## THE DOLEFUL DEATH OF COCK ROBIN



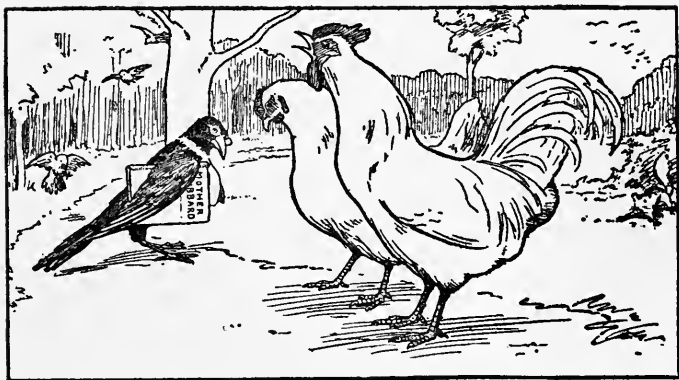
It was a merry time  
When Jenny Wren was young,  
So neatly as she danced,  
And so sweetly as she sung,  
Robin Redbreast lost his heart :  
He was a gallant bird ;  
He doft his hat to Jenny,  
And thus to her he said :—

“My dearest Jenny Wren,  
If you will but be mine,  
You shall dine on cherry pie,  
And drink nice currant wine.  
I'll dress you like a Goldfinch,  
Or like a Peacock gay;  
So if you'll have me, Jenny,  
Let us appoint the day.”

Jenny blushed behind her fan,  
And thus declared her mind:  
“Then let it be to-morrow, Rob,  
I take your offer kind—  
Cherry pie is very good!  
So is currant wine!  
But I will wear my brown gown,  
And never dress too fine.”

Robin rose up early  
At the break of day;  
He flew to Jenny Wren's house,  
To sing a roundelay.  
He met the Cock and Hen,  
And bid the Cock declare,  
This was his wedding-day  
With Jenny Wren, the fair.

The Cock then blew his horn,  
To let the neighbors know,  
This was Robin's wedding-day,  
And they might see the show.  
And first came Parson Rook,  
With his spectacles and band,  
And one of *Mother Hubbard's* books  
He held within his hand.



Then followed him the Lark,  
For he could sweetly sing,  
And he was to be clerk  
At Cock Robin's wedding.  
He sung of Robin's love  
For little Jenny Wren;  
And when he came unto the end,  
Then he began again.

Then came the bride and bridegroom,  
Quite plainly was she dressed,  
And blushed so much, her cheeks were  
As red as Robin's breast.  
But Robin cheered her up:  
"My pretty Jen," said he,  
"We're going to be married  
And happy then we'll be."

The Goldfinch came on next,  
To give away the bride;  
The Linnet, being bride's maid,  
Walked by Jenny's side;  
And, as she was a-walking,  
She said, "Upon my word,  
I think that your Cock Robin  
Is a very pretty bird."

The Bullfinch walked by Robin,  
And thus to him did say,  
"Pray, mark, friend Robin Redbreast,  
That Goldfinch, dressed so gay;  
What though her gay apparel  
Becomes her very well,  
Yet Jenny's modest dress and look  
Must bear away the bell."



The Blackbird and the Thrush,  
And charming Nightingale,  
Whose sweet jug sweetly echoes  
Through every grove and dale;  
The Sparrow and Tom Tit,  
And many more, were there:  
All came to see the wedding  
Of Jenny Wren, the fair.



“O then,” says Parson Rook,  
“Who gives this maid away?”  
“I do,” says the Goldfinch,  
“And her fortune I will pay:  
Here’s a bag of grain of many sorts,  
And other things beside;  
Now happy be the bridegroom,  
And happy be the bride!”

“And will you have her, Robin,  
To be your wedded wife?”

“Yes, I will,” says Robin,  
“And love her all my life.”

“And will you have him, Jenny,  
Your husband now to be?”

“Yes, I will,” says Jenny,  
“And love him heartily.”

Then on her finger fair

Cock Robin put the ring;

“You’re married now,” says Parson Rook.

While the Lark aloud did sing:

“Happy be the bridegroom,

And happy be the bride!

And may not man, nor bird, nor beast,

This happy pair divide.”

The birds were asked to dine;

Not Jenny’s friends alone,

But every pretty songster

That had Cock Robin known.

They had a cherry pie,

Besides some currant wine,

And every guest brought something,

That sumptuous they might dine.

Now they all sat or stood  
To eat and to drink;  
And every one said what  
He happened to think;  
They each took a bumper,  
And drank to the pair:  
Cock Robin, the bridegroom,  
And Jenny Wren, the fair.



The dinner-things removed,  
They all began to sing;  
And soon they made the place  
Near a mile round to ring.  
The concert it was fine;  
And every bird tried  
Who best could sing for Robin  
And Jenny Wren, the bride.

Then in came the Cuckoo,  
And he made a great rout;  
He caught hold of Jenny,  
And pulled her about.  
Cock Robin was angry,  
And so was the Sparrow,  
Who fetched in a hurry  
His bow and his arrow.



His aim then he took,  
But he took it not right;  
His skill was not good,  
Or he shot in a fright;  
For the Cuckoo he missed,  
But Cock Robin killed!—  
And all the birds mourned  
That his blood was so spilled.



## THE BURIAL OF POOR COCK ROBIN

Who killed Cock Robin?

“I,” said the Sparrow,  
“With my bow and arrow;  
And I killed Cock Robin.”



Who saw him die?

“I,” said the Fly,  
“With my little eye;  
And I saw him die.”



Who caught his blood?

“I,” said the Fish,  
“With my little dish;  
And I caught his blood.”



Who made his shroud?

“I,” said the Beetle,  
“With my little needle;  
And I made his shroud.”





Who will be the parson?  
 "I," said the Rook;  
 "With my little book;  
 And I will be the parson."



Who will dig his grave?  
 "I," said the Owl,  
 "With my spade and shovel;  
 And I'll dig his grave."



Who will be the clerk?  
 "I," said the Lark,  
 "If 'tis not in the dark;  
 And I will be the clerk."



Who'll carry him to the grave?  
 "I," said the Kite,  
 "If 'tis not in the night;  
 And I'll carry him to the grave."



Who will be the chief mourner?  
 "I," said the Dove,  
 "Because of my love;  
 And I will be chief mourner."



Who will sing a psalm?  
 "I," said the Thrush,  
 As she sat in a bush;  
 "And I will sing a psalm."

Who will bear the pall?

“We,” said the Wren,  
Both the Cock and the Hen;  
“And we will bear the pall.”



Who will toll the bell?

“I,” said the Bull,  
“Because I can pull.”  
And so Cock Robin farewell.



All the birds of the air  
Fell to sighing and sobbing  
When they heard the bell toll  
For poor Cock Robin.



## THE OLD WOMAN AND HER PIG



Once upon a time, an old woman was sweeping her little house, when, to her great joy, she found a silver sixpence.

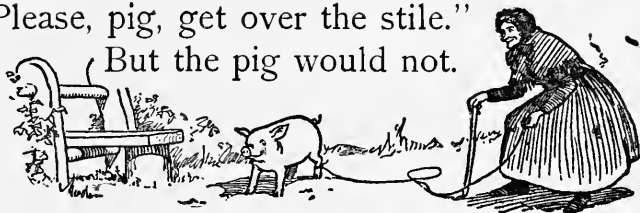
“What,” said she, “shall I do with this little sixpence? I think I will go to market and buy a pig.” So the next day, she went to market, and bought a nice little white pig. She tied a string to one of the pig’s legs, and began to drive him home.

On the way, the old woman and her pig came to a stile, and she said,—



"Please, pig, get over the stile."

But the pig would not.



Just then a little dog came trotting up, and the old woman said to him,—

"Dog, dog, bite pig ;

Pig won't get over the stile,

And I sha'n't get home to-night."

But the dog would not.

So the old woman held up her stick and said,—

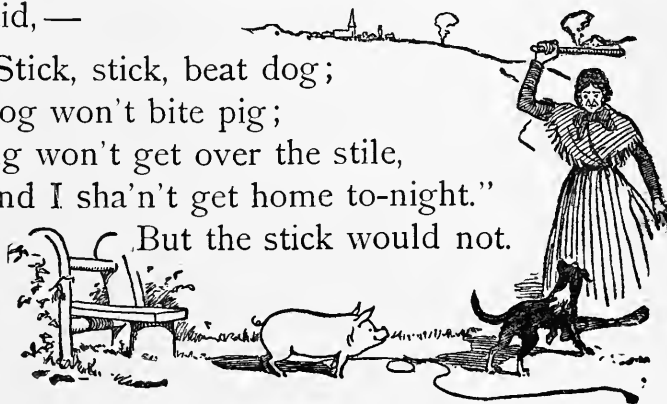
"Stick, stick, beat dog ;

Dog won't bite pig ;

Pig won't get over the stile,

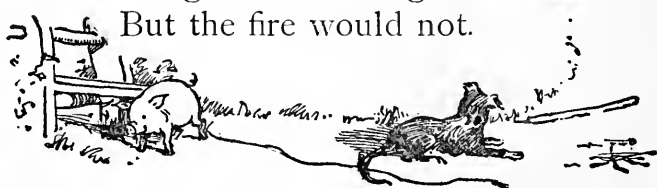
And I sha'n't get home to-night."

But the stick would not.



So the old woman gathered some bits of wood together to make a fire, and set them on fire, and then threw her stick into the fire, and said, —

“Fire, fire, burn stick;  
Stick won't beat dog;  
Dog won't bite pig;  
Pig won't get over the stile,  
And I sha'n't get home to-night.”



But the fire would not.

So the old woman fetched a pail of water that was standing near, and said, —

“Water, water, quench fire;  
Fire won't burn stick;  
Stick won't beat dog;  
Dog won't bite pig;  
Pig won't get over the stile,  
And I sha'n't get home to-night.”

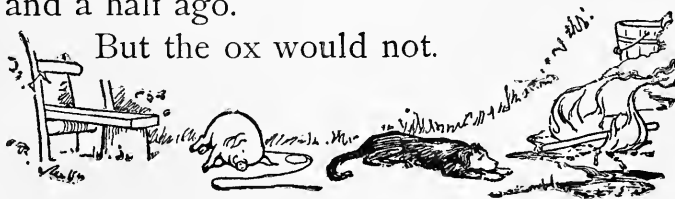
But the water would not.

Then the old woman saw an ox coming;  
so she said, —

“Ox, ox, drink water;  
Water won’t quench fire;  
Fire won’t burn stick;  
Stick won’t beat dog;  
Dog won’t bite pig;  
Pig won’t go;  
I see by the moonlight,  
It’s long past midnight;  
Time pig and I were home an hour  
and a half ago.”



But the ox would not.



So the old woman turned round, and saw a  
butcher, and she said, —

“Butcher, butcher, kill ox;  
Ox won’t drink water;  
Water won’t quench fire;  
Fire won’t burn stick;  
Stick won’t beat dog;  
Dog won’t bite pig;



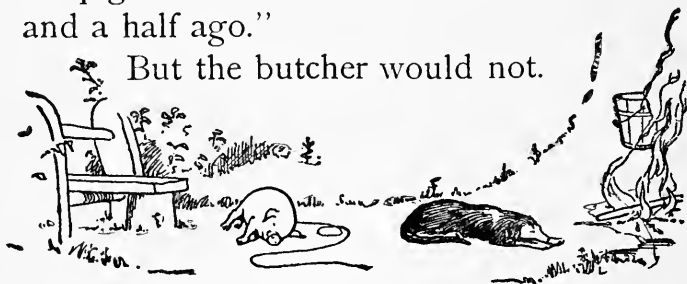
Pig won't go.

I see by the moonlight,

It's long past midnight;

Time pig and I were home an hour  
and a half ago."

But the butcher would not.



So the old woman took a rope out of her  
pocket, and said, —

"Rope, rope, hang butcher;

Butcher won't kill ox;

Ox won't drink water;

Water won't quench fire;

Fire won't burn stick;

Stick won't beat dog;

Dog won't bite pig;

Pig won't go.

I see by the moonlight,

It's long past midnight;

Time pig and I were home an hour  
and a half ago."

But the rope would not.



Just then a large brown mouse ran across the meadow, and she said,—

“Mouse, mouse, gnaw rope;  
Rope won’t hang butcher;  
Butcher won’t kill ox;  
Ox won’t drink water;  
Water won’t quench fire;  
Fire won’t burn stick;  
Stick won’t beat dog;  
Dog won’t bite pig;  
Pig won’t go.  
I see by the moonlight,  
It’s long past midnight;  
Time pig and I were home an hour and a half ago.”

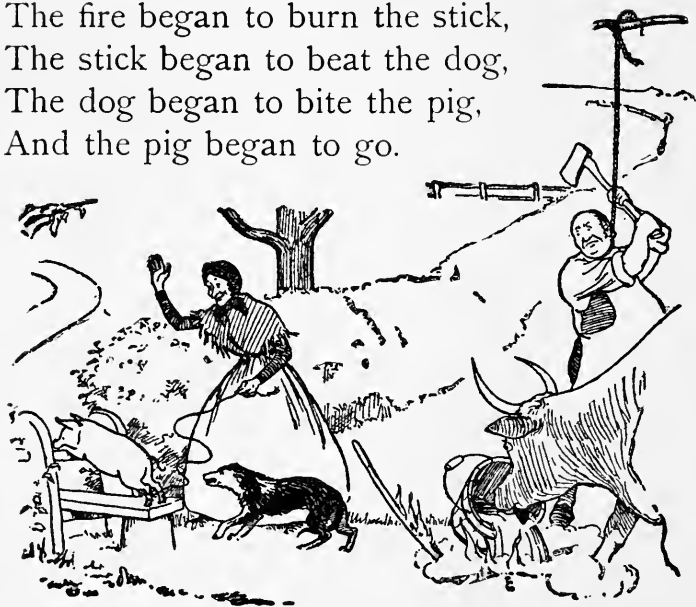


“Yes,” said the mouse, “I will if you will give me some cheese.”

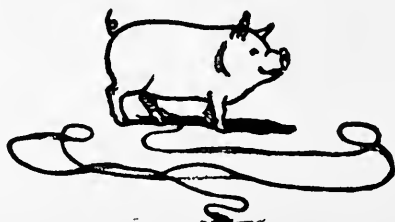
So the old woman put her hand in her pocket, and found a nice piece of cheese; and when the mouse had eaten it,

The mouse began to gnaw the rope,  
The rope began to hang the butcher,  
The butcher began to kill the ox,  
The ox began to drink the water,

The water began to quench the fire,  
The fire began to burn the stick,  
The stick began to beat the dog,  
The dog began to bite the pig,  
And the pig began to go.



But what time the old woman and her pig  
got home, you, nor I, nor nobody knows.



DAME WIGGINS OF LEE, AND



HER SEVEN WONDERFUL CATS



Dame Wiggins of Lee  
 Was a worthy old soul,  
 As e'er threaded a needle,  
 or wash'd in a bowl;  
 She held mice and rats  
 In such antipa-thy,  
 That seven fine cats  
 Kept Dame Wiggins of Lee.





The rats and mice scared  
By this fierce whisker'd crew,  
The poor seven cats  
Soon had nothing to do;  
So, as any one idle  
She ne'er loved to see,  
She sent them to school,  
Did Dame Wiggins of Lee.



The Master soon wrote  
 That they all of them knew  
 How to read the word "milk"  
 And to spell the word "mew."  
 And they all washed their faces  
 Before they took tea :  
 "Were there ever such dears!"  
 Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



He had also thought well  
To comply with their wish  
To spend all their play-time  
In learning to fish  
For stitlings; they sent her  
A present of three,  
Which, fried, were a feast  
For Dame Wiggins of Lee.



But soon she grew tired  
 Of living alone;  
 So she sent for her cats  
 From school to come home.  
 Each rowing a wherry,  
 Returning you see:  
 The frolic made merry  
 Dame Wiggins of Lee.



The Dame was quite pleas'd  
 And ran out to market;  
 When she came back  
 They were mending the carpet.  
 The needle each handled  
 As brisk as a bee;  
 "Well done, my good cats,"  
 Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



To give them a treat,  
She ran out for some rice;  
When she came back,  
They were skating on ice.  
“I shall soon see one down,  
Aye, perhaps, two or three,  
I’ll bet half-a-crown,”  
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



When spring-time came back  
They had breakfast of curds;  
And were greatly afraid  
Of disturbing the birds.  
“If you sit, like good cats,  
All the seven in a tree,  
They will teach you to sing!”  
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

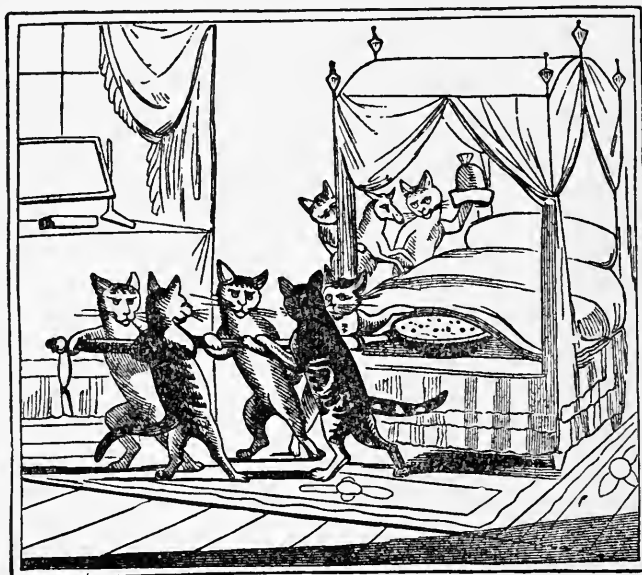


So they sat in a tree,  
 And said "Beautiful! Hark!"  
 And they listened and looked  
 In the clouds for the lark.  
 Then sang, by the fireside,  
 Symphonious-ly  
 A song without words  
 To Dame Wiggins of Lee.





They called the next day  
On the tomtit and sparrow,  
And wheeled a poor sick lamb  
Home in a barrow.  
“You shall all have some sprats  
For your humani-ty,  
My seven good cats,”  
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



While she ran to the field,  
To look for its dam,  
They were warming the bed  
For the poor sick lamb:  
They turned up the clothes  
All as neat as could be;  
“I shall ne’er want a nurse,”  
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



She wished them good night,

And went up to bed:

When, lo! in the morning,

The cats were all fled.

But soon — what a fuss!

“Where can they all be?

Here, pussy, puss, puss!”

Cried Dame Wiggins of Lee.



The Dame's heart was nigh broke,  
So she sat down to weep,  
When she saw them come back  
Each riding a sheep:  
She fondled and patted  
Each purring tom-my:  
"Ah! welcome, my dears,"  
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



The Dame was unable  
Her pleasure to smother,  
To see the sick lamb  
Jump up to its mother.  
In spite of the gout,  
And a pain in her knee,  
She went dancing about:  
Did Dame Wiggins of Lee.



The Farmer soon heard  
Where his sheep went astray,  
And arrived at Dame's door  
With his faithful dog Tray.  
He knocked with his crook,  
And the stranger to see,  
Out the window did look  
Dame Wiggins of Lee.



For their kindness he had them  
All drawn by his team ;  
And gave them some field-mice.  
And raspberry cream.  
Said he, " All my stock  
You shall presently see ;  
For I honor the cats  
Of Dame Wiggins of Lee."



He sent his maid out  
For some muffins and crumpets;  
And when he turn'd round  
They were blowing of trumpets.  
Said he, "I suppose  
She's as deaf as can be,  
Or this ne'er could be borne  
By Dame Wiggins of Lee."

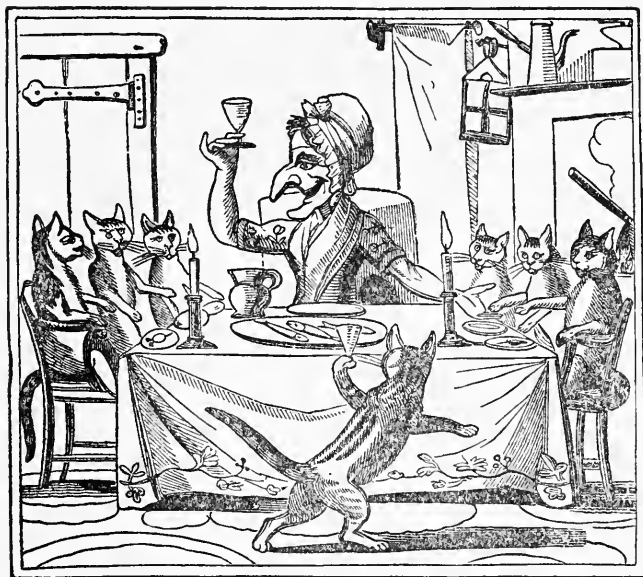




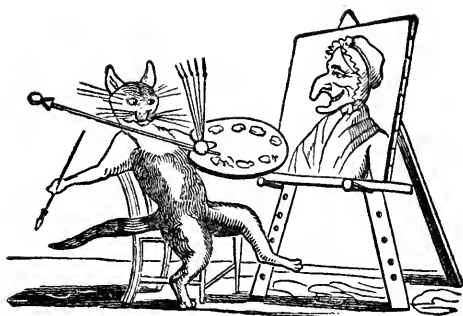
To show them his poultry,  
 He turn'd them all loose,  
 Then each nimbly leap'd  
 On the back of a goose,  
 Which frighten'd them so  
 That they ran to the sea,  
 And half-drown'd the poor cats  
 Of Dame Wiggins of Lee.



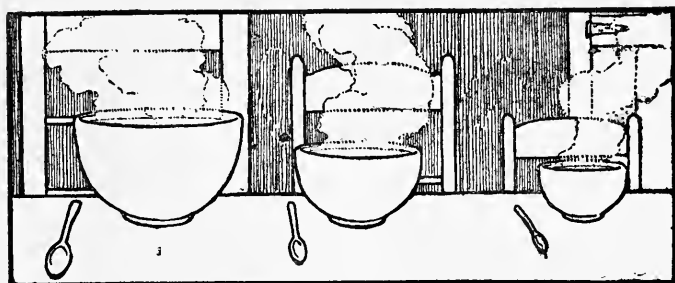
For the care of his lamb,  
 And their comical pranks,  
 He gave them a ham  
 And abundance of thanks.  
 "I wish you good-day,  
 My fine fellows," said he;  
 "My compliments, pray,  
 To Dame Wiggins of Lee."



You see them arrived  
At their Dame's welcome door;  
They show her their presents,  
And all their good store.  
"Now come in to supper,  
And sit down with me;  
All welcome once more,"  
Cried Dame Wiggins of Lee



## THE STORY OF THE THREE BEARS



Once upon a time there were Three Bears, who lived together in a house of their own in a wood. One of them was a Little, Small, Wee Bear; and one was a Middle-sized Bear, and the other was a Great, Huge Bear. They had each a pot for their porridge, a little pot for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized pot for the Middle Bear; and a great pot for the Great, Huge Bear. And they had each a chair to sit in; a little chair for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized chair for the Middle Bear; and a great chair for the Great, Huge Bear. And they had each a bed to sleep in; a little bed for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized bed for

the Middle Bear; and a great bed for the Great, Huge Bear.

One day, after they had made the porridge for their breakfast, and poured it into their porridge-pots, they walked out into the wood while the porridge was cooling, that they might not burn their mouths, by beginning too soon to eat it. And while they were walking, a little old woman came to the house. She could not have been a good, honest old woman; for first, she looked in at the window, and then she peeped in at the



keyhole; and, seeing nobody in the house, she lifted the latch. The door was not fastened, because the bears were good bears, who did nobody any harm, and never suspected that anybody would harm them. So the little old woman opened the door and went in; and well pleased she was when she saw the porridge on the table. If she had been a good little old woman she would have waited till the bears came home, and then, perhaps, they would have asked her to breakfast; for they were good bears,—a little rough or so, as the manner of bears is, but for all that very good-natured and hospitable. But she was an impudent, bad old woman, and set about helping herself.

So first she tasted the porridge of the Great, Huge Bear, and that was too hot for her. And then she tasted the porridge of the Middle Bear, and that was too cold for her. And then she went to the porridge of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and tasted that; and that was neither too hot nor too cold, but just right; and she liked it so well, that she ate it all up.

Then the little old woman sat down in the chair of the Great, Huge Bear, and that

was too hard for her. And then she sat down in the chair of the Middle Bear, and that was too soft for her. And then she sat down in the chair of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and that was neither too hard nor too

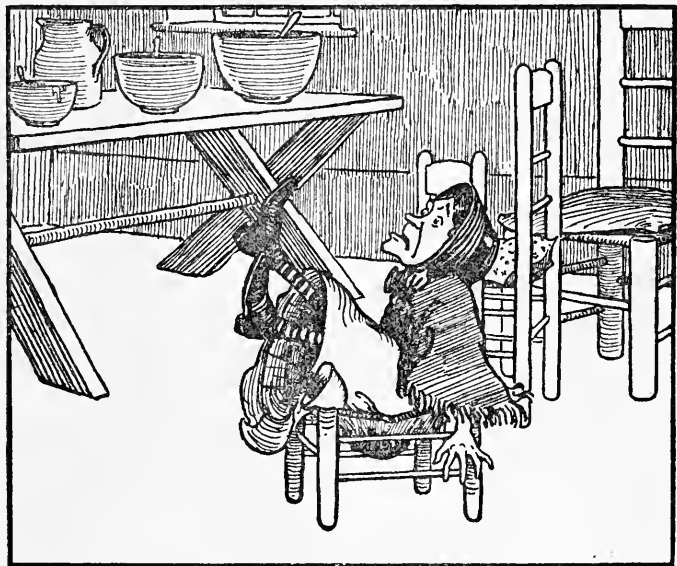


soft, but just right. So she seated herself in it, and there she sat till the bottom of the chair came out, and down came she, plump upon the ground.

Then the little old woman went upstairs into the bed-chamber in which the three bears slept. And first she lay down upon the bed



of the Great, Huge Bear; but that was too high at the head for her. And next she lay down upon the bed of the Middle Bear; and that was too high at the foot for her. And then she lay down upon the bed of the Little,

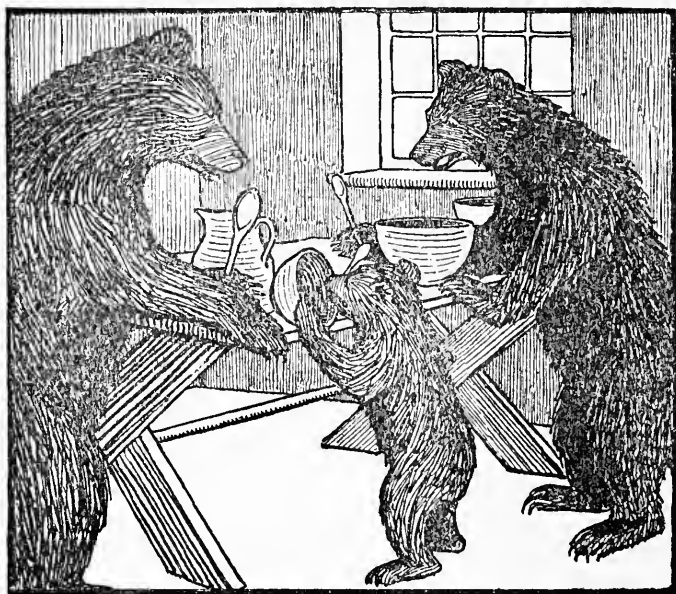


Small, Wee Bear; and that was neither too high at the head, nor at the foot, but just right. So she covered herself up comfortably, and lay there till she fell fast asleep.

By this time the three bears thought their porridge would be cool enough; so they came home to breakfast. Now the little old woman

had left the spoon of the Great, Huge Bear, standing in his porridge.

‘SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY POR-  
RIDGE!’



said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great rough, gruff voice. And when the Middle Bear looked at his, he saw that the spoon was standing in it too. They were wooden spoons; if they had been silver ones, the naughty old woman would have put them in her pocket.

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE!"

said the Middle Bear, in his middle voice.

Then the Little, Small, Wee Bear looked at his, and there was the spoon in the porridge-pot, but the porridge was all gone.

*"Somebody has been at my porridge, and has eaten it all up!"*

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Upon this the three bears, seeing that some one had entered their house, and eaten up the Little, Small, Wee Bear's breakfast, began to look about them. Now the little old woman had not put the hard cushion straight when she rose from the chair of the Great, Huge Bear:

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!"

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little old woman had squatted down the soft cushion of the Middle Bear.

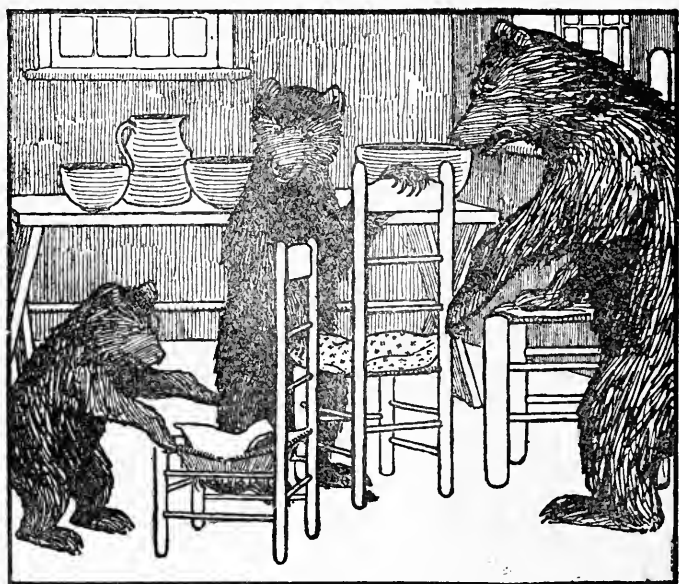
"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!"

said the Middle Bear, in his middle voice.

And you know what the little old woman had done to the third chair.

*"Somebody has been sitting in my chair, and has sat the bottom of it out!"*

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.



Then the three bears thought it necessary that they should make farther search; so they went upstairs into their bed-chamber. Now the little old woman had pulled the pillow of the Great, Huge Bear out of its place.

**"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY  
BED!"**

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little old woman had pulled the bolster of the Middle Bear out of its place.

**"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY BED!"**  
said the Middle Bear in his middle voice.



And when the Little, Small, Wee Bear came to look at his bed, there was the bolster in its place, and the pillow in its place upon

the bolster, and upon the pillow was the little old woman's head,—which was not in its place, for she had no business there.

*“Somebody has been lying in my bed, — and here she is !”*

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

The little old woman had heard in her sleep the great, rough, gruff voice of the Great, Huge Bear; but she was so fast asleep that it was no more to her than the roaring of wind, or the rumbling of thunder. And she had heard the middle voice of the Middle Bear, but it was only as if she had heard someone speaking in a dream. But when she heard the little, small, wee voice of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, it was so sharp, and so shrill, that it awakened her at once. Up she started; and when she saw the Three Bears on one side of the bed, she tumbled herself out at the other, and ran to the window. Now the window was open, because the bears, like good, tidy bears as they were, always opened their bed-chamber window when they got up in the morning. Out the little old woman

jumped; and whether she broke her neck in the fall, or ran into the wood and was lost



there, or found her way out of the wood and was taken up by the constable and sent to the House of Correction for a vagrant, as she was, I cannot tell. But the Three Bears never saw anything more of her.





## NOTE.

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OF the six famous nursery tales contained in this volume, the first four are more or less current in different forms all over the globe. These versions are in the oldest form in which they have been told in the English language.

"The House that Jack Built" and "The Old Woman and her Pig" are examples of what are called accumulative stories; stories which also may be called "incunabulae," for they come out of the very cradle of story-telling. We find examples of them in the dawning period of almost every literature. In this same class in English, not quite so well known as these, are "Tittymouse and Tattymouse," "John Ball Shot Them All," and "The Key of the King's Garden."

The story of "The Three Bears" was written by Robert Southey, and occurs in "The Doctor," Vol. IV, 1837. It is here restored to almost exactly the form in which the poet wrote it. Most of the versions current are tortured and much emasculated, the real point and true moral of the story being lost sight of in the desire to make it pretty and pleasing. It is probably a reduction to writing of a once current English folk tale, but that indefatigable folklorist, Mr. Joseph Jacobs has been able to furnish no exact parallels. The incident of sitting in the three chairs, however, is to be found in Grimm's "Sneewitchen." Pro-

fessor Dowden says that Southey's memory is kept alive more by the "Three Bears" than by anything else he wrote.

The following is the full title of "Dame Wiggins of Lee, and Her Seven Wonderful Cats: A humorous tale written principally by a lady of ninety [Mrs. Sharpe]. Edited, with additional verses, by John Ruskin, LL.D., Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent, 1885." In the preface Mr. Ruskin says :

The woodcuts which illustrate the following nursery rhymes have been facsimiled with exemplary care and admirable skill, from those which were given coloured by hand in the edition of 1823. But I think that clever children will like having the mere outlines to colour in their own way ; and for older students there may be some interest in observing how much life and reality may be obtained by the simplest methods of engraving, when the design is founded on action instead of effect.

I have spoken in "Fors" ("I aver these rhymes to possess the primary value of rhyme — that is, to be rhythmical in a pleasant and exemplary degree," vol. v, pp. 37, 38) of the meritorious rhythmic cadence of the verses, not, in its ways, easily imitable. In the old books no account is given of what the cats learned when they went to school, and I thought my younger readers might be glad of some notice of such particulars. I have added, therefore, the rhymes on the *third*, *fourth*, *eighth*, and *ninth* pages [in this book pages 39, 31, 35, and 36], the kindness of Miss Greenaway supplying the needful illustrations. But my rhymes do not ring like the real ones ; and I would allow Miss Greenaway to subdue the grace of her first sketches to the formality of the earlier work ; but we alike trust that the interpolation may not be thought to detract from the interest of the little book, which, for the rest, I have the greatest pleasure in commending to the indulgence of the Christmas fireside, because it relates nothing that is sad, and portrays nothing that is ugly.



